

## POLITICS, HE SAYS

E. P. Ripley Sees a Crisis in Government Ownership.

Santa Fe Head Believes That Politicians Will Rule.

## BOOST OPERATING EXPENSES

Examples of Trouble in Other Countries Proves It.

Ripley Opposes Bill in Congress as a Citizen.

The voice of President Ripley of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railway, comes to Topeka today in a letter to the president of the Santa Fe in congress for the government ownership of railroads. President Ripley says he does not oppose the plan as an officer of the Santa Fe. The word from Mr. Ripley comes as the first objection to the intentions of Senators Cummins and Kenyon of Iowa to introduce a bill for the purchase of the railway systems of the country.

President Ripley fires the opening gun with these words: "I do not oppose this plan as a railway officer. I do oppose it, however, as a citizen. I believe that under our form of government and political conditions it would be a calamity that possibly could befall the American people."

This first real statement from President Ripley is of special interest to the west owing to the recent statement of Chairman Schumacher of the Rock Island executive board in Topeka a few days ago. Mr. Schumacher said:

"God save the country if the railways are taken over under government ownership. It means higher rates and poorer service."

President Ripley's ideas. As a railway official President Ripley expresses this view: "The government could not acquire the railways without paying just compensation for them. The roads are now being so regulated that the security owners are not receiving an adequate return, and if they could get the return they could invest it where they would earn a larger return. Therefore, government ownership might be a blessing to the owners of railway securities."

When government ownership comes, a great problem, in Mr. Ripley's opinion, will be how to keep politics out of railway operation. "Politics," he declares, "is a very bad thing. It is the management of state railways in any country, with the possible exceptions of Prussia and Japan. Furthermore, politics is not now kept out of anything done by our government. We cannot keep politics out of our river and harbor improvements, or out of our appropriations for public buildings, or even out of our legislation regarding the location and maintenance of army posts and naval stations, how can it be rationally assumed that we could keep it out of a state railway system employing 1,700,000 soldiers, sailors, marines and civilians?"

Mr. Ripley calls attention to the Western railway situation, lately acquired by the government. In the four years, 1909 and 1912, inclusive, the gross earnings of the line under government ownership increased only 4 per cent, while the operating expenses increased over 50 per cent, in consequence of which the net earnings declined over 70 per cent.

Mr. Ripley refers to an estimate made by Senator Cummins to the effect that a valuation of all the railroads of the United States would amount to twenty billion dollars. If the government should buy the railways at a cost of twenty billion dollars, says Mr. Ripley, "and have to pay three and half per cent interest on the money, its total interest would amount to \$100,000,000 a year, which exceeds by \$25,000,000 the total interest and dividends paid by the railways during the fiscal year 1911, according to the report of the Interstate commerce commission."

## CALL FOR MONEY.

(Continued from Page One.)

lems in connection with public utilities to determine the quality and cost of service rendered by the various utilities the bureau has received \$100,000. For an investigation of the materials used in rails, wheels and axles and other railway equipment and the cause of their failure, \$30,000 is asked for this year.

Among other estimates from the same department is \$168,000 for the children's bureau. Secretary McAdoo estimates that he will need \$1,500,000 to collect the income tax. He says that it is necessary to have a new tax collection machinery will be perfected by the time the appropriation is made and because investigation will be made to determine cases of taxes withheld in previous years.

The department of agriculture asks congress for \$400,000 to use in eradicating the cattle tick, an increase of \$75,000, declaring that several southern states are manifesting an interest in cattle raising to look into similar operations in fish, \$25,000 for an oyster investigation and \$20,000 for a biological investigation of food and drug products, with \$654,300 for the enforcement of the pure food and drug act.

To Investigate the Fly. The sum of \$54,280 is wanted to "investigate" insects and insecticides, particular attention to be devoted to malaria bearing mosquitoes and the ordinary house fly. The department wants \$168,330 for investigating road making with \$70,000 for field experiments. A request is made for \$194,140 to collect and disseminate information concerning the methods of marketing and distributing farm products and \$50,000 for demonstrations in co-operation with the states, of methods of live stock raising in cotton and cane sugar states.

The state department evidences its determination to house American representatives abroad in buildings furnished by the government in asking \$150,000 for a site and an embassy building in Mexico City, \$140,000 for the legation at Bern, Switzerland and \$150,000 for an embassy building in Tokio.

For continuing work on public buildings already authorized the treasury department puts in an estimate of \$6,111,283. Among the larger items are \$2,000,000 for the Brooklyn post office; \$200,000 for Denver and \$550,000 for the New Haven post office and court house.

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